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SRI LANKA

THE BOAT PEOPLE

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Tamil TIMES

THEY SHALL RETURN

The 'most grotesque crimes' committed by the Sri Lankan security forces 'away from international notice' which David Graves of the London 'Daily Telegraph' referred to have inexorably resulted in the flight of several thousands of Tamils into neighbouring South India. Every day nearly a thousand terrified and trembling Tamils, old and young, women and infants, are landing on the South Indian coast. Forcibly uprooted from their homes, families and occupations, the dispossessed Tamils are fleeing in all manner of boats from the northern coast of Sri Lanka to escape from the continuing atrocities committed by the Sri Lanka Sinhala forces. An estimated 20,000 Tamils have fled during the last two months.

Photographs and news reports in the international media testify to the terrifying experiences faced by the Tamil refugees who are now in Tamil Nadu. Dispossessed and disowned in the land of their birth, the Tamils have become Sri Lanka's boat people. In spite of the incontrovertible evidence, Mr H.W. Jayewardene, the Sri Lankan President's brother who headed the delegation to the 41st sessions of the United Nations Human Rights Commission recently held in Geneva, 'categorically rejected' the existence of a refugee problem and said: 'Attempts are being made by alarmist reports to create an artificial refugee situation.' Such cynical disregard for truth on the part of the Sri Lankan government is only matched by its callous and inhuman unconcern for the plight of the Tamil people.

Terrorising the Tamils, depriving them of their homes, and driving them away from the areas in which they have traditionally lived is the logical follow-up to the government's policy of colonising Tamil areas. In short, the government is seeking to turn the Tamil areas of the North and East of Sri Lanka into Sinhala dominated provinces. The 'most **indisciplined** *army' in the world is being ruthlessly employed to achieve this end with scant regard to the tragic consequences for the Tamil people and their fundamental human rights. Its only aim is to turn Sri Lanka into a 100-per-cent Sinhala-Buddhist country.*

The government of Sri Lanka is sadly mistaken if it entertains the illusion that the three million Tamil people can be subjugated and decimated in this manner. With lethal weapons supplied by foreign regimes and aided by the Israeli Mossad and hired mercenaries, the Sri Lankan government may feel invincible today. Hitler too, seeking Aryan supremacy, was once thought to be invincible. Nemesis is bound to strike the pint-sized Sri Lankan Hitlers who seek 'Aryan' Sinhala domination.

All sections of the oppressed Tamil nation are now more conscious of the need to unite today than at any time in the past. The ranks of those Tamils determined to liberate the people from Sinhala racist oppression and military terror are increasing daily. The battered Tamils of today will soon be ready for the eventual struggle, a struggle ennobled by the righteousness of its cause, the justice of its case and the freedom which is their birthright. Even those Tamils who are being driven out today shall return sooner than later to retake their homes, repossess their land and regain their rights.

BUDDHIST SCHOLAR ATTACKS RACISTS

A scathing attack on racism and racists was made by one of Sri Lanka's leading Buddhist scholars, Dr W.S. Karunaratne, Professor of Buddhist Philosophy at the University of Kelaniya and former Sri Lanka Ambassador to the USA, when he spoke at a meeting at Chakkindaramaya Temple, Ratmalana, in the constituency of National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali.

Professor Karunaratne said that the government's resort to militarism in order to solve the ethnic problem could be the starting point of continuous civil war in the country. In his view, those who were today holding meetings, lectures and seminars calling for the 'unity of the Sinhalese' were in fact only interested in providing a cover for whipped-up terrorism against the Tamil people.

Referring to the government's announced intention to settle Sinhalese in the north and the east, Professor Karunaratne, said that, although this was not a step that could be realised in practice, empty talk like this could only harden feelings among the minorities against the Sinhalese.

The government's sudden and unusual call for the display of national flags on February 4 this year was more chauvinist than patriotic. What it wanted was to divert against the Tamils the discontent among the Sinhalese people at the government's wrongs, blunders, misdeeds and corrupt practices, and thus protect and consolidate itself.

Contribution

The Tamil people, said the Professor, had made a significant contribution to the development of Sri Lanka. This included the spread of Buddhism in our country.

The main texts for the study of Buddhist philosophy had been written by scholars like Buddhagosha, Buddhaditta, Dhammapala, Anurudda and others, who were both Buddhist priests and Tamils.

In fact, Tamils in India had embraced Buddhism even before the Sinhalese did.

The founders of Buddhism, like Lord Buddha and his disciples Ananda and Mahinda, were not Sinhalese but Indans. But today those who talk so much about Buddhism and the Sinhalese race, including Buddhist monks, do not mention these facts or the contribution that Tamil Buddhist monks made to the spread of Buddhism in Sri Lanka.

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U.N. HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
SRI LANKA SLAMMED FOR HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

From our Special Correspondent in Geneva

For the first time in two years, the spotlight turned on Sri Lanka, during the 41st sessions of the United Nations Human Rights Commission (UNHRC) held recently in Geneva, for its appalling record of human rights violations.

To be in the company of the same notorious league as Paraguay, Guatemala, Peru, El Salvador, South Africa, Indonesia etc, must have really hurt the Sri Lankan delegation, headed by no less a person than the Sri Lankan President's brother Mr H.W. Jayewardene QC. The presence of this heavyweight, with five others including Mr Jayantha Dhanapala, the Sri Lankan Ambassador in Geneva and the Deputy Solicitor-General, Mr Sunil de Silva, indicated the nervousness of the Sri Lankan government.

Fearing that an adverse resolution was a likely possibility, the Sri Lankan delegates spared no efforts to avoid such an eventuality. Dinners, lunches, and tea parties for chosen government delegations and delegates from Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), behind-the-scenes manipulations, etc., saw no limits as far as the Sri Lankan delegation was concerned.

Danger signals

It appeared that Argentina, which had acquired a remarkable reputation in international forums, specially after the overthrow of the military regime and the vigour with which it is pursuing action against the former dictators for crimes committed against the Argentina people, was prepared to sponsor a resolution against Sri Lanka with the full backing of the Indian delegation. In fact, many member countries had conveyed their support for such a resolution.

As the lobbying was gathering momentum, with several NGOs taking an active interest, the prospect of a resolution against Sri Lanka seemed very bright. This sent the Sri Lankan delegation into a renewed frenzy of activity. The danger signals would appear to have been relayed back to Colombo. The government there, which had up to then rejected any form of negotiations with a role for India in regard to the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka, despatched its Minister of National Security to New Delhi to meet Mr Rajiv Gandhi. What happened between the two at Delhi is anybody's guess, but one thing was certain, and that was Sri Lanka was resuming negotiations with the Indian government.

Indo-Sri Lanka talks?

This apparent change in Colombo's attitude towards Delhi would appear to have had a considerable influence on what was going on at Geneva and eventually the deadline for resolutions passed without the anticipated resolution on Sri Lanka being tabled. It is not without significance that the head of the Indian delegation, Dr Dhillon, said on March 13 during his intervention before the UNHRC, 'I would not like to say more because consultations are under way between our two governments for defusing the situation so that a climate conducive to a political settlement is created.'

The fact that a resolution was not tabled did not prevent delegates from slamming Sri Lanka for the gross violations of human rights in Sri Lanka. Nine NGOs had already circulated a comprehensive statement in English, French and Spanish on the current situation in Sri Lanka, covering such subjects as extrajudicial and summary killings, torture, indiscriminate arrests, incommunicado detention, forcible evacuation of Tamils from their homes and settlement of Sinhalese in Tamil areas, army excesses, attack on democratic institutions, the new emergency regulations and their adverse impact on civilian life and the exodus of Tamil refugees into India.

A number of government delegates from several countries made direct references to the current crisis in Sri Lanka and roundly condemned the indisciplined conduct of the Sri Lankan security forces.

Irish concern

The leader of the Irish delegation, Mr F.M. Hayes, stated that it was the duty of the Sri Lankan government to ensure that human rights and fundamental freedoms of all Sri Lankans were fully safeguarded. He said that the Irish government was disturbed at the numerous reports of human rights violations committed against the Tamil population by the security forces. Rejecting the excuse that the excesses were committed by 'indisciplined members of the security forces', Mr Hayes said, 'it is, however, the government which trains and deploys these forces, and it is the government which remains responsible for their actions.'

He added that the government's efforts to seek a military solution to the problem are contributing to a spiral of violence which, if allowed to continue unchecked, will result in continued suffering of the innocent civilian population. To avoid this outcome and prevent increasing alienation of the Tamil population it is necessary that their legitimate aspirations and grievances be met within the framework of the Sri Lankan state.'

Delegates from other countries including The Netherlands, Sweden, West Germany and Australia, also expressed similiar sentiments. The statement from India was much more comprehensive (see page 8).

Among the NGOs, the International Commission of Jurists, Amnesty International, Pax Christi, Pax Romana and Centre Europe-Tiers Monde dealt with the current situation providing graphic accounts of the violation of human rights in Sri Lanka.

Harrowing tale

The several hundred delegates and observers were given a harrowing account of the random murders, arson and rape and other forms of atrocities committed against the Tamil people by the security forces and heard an impassioned plea for concrete action by the UN Human Rights Commission from Mr P. Rajanayagam who spoke on behalf of Centre Europe-Tiers Monde. The interventions by Mr Rajanayagam, a Sri Lankan Tamil himself, who narrated the tragic tale of how his own family had been forced to flee by boat to India due to military terror, must have caused serious embarrassment to the Sri Lankan delegation, which has time and again endeavoured to keep Tamil human rights activists out of such forums by bringing pressure upon NGOs not to grant accreditation. The embarrassment was quite apparent from the behaviour of the members of the Sri Lankan delegation who tried to hide their faces away from the staring looks of the delegates present.

The response of the Sri Lankan delegations to the several charges levelled at them was pathetic and patchy, and was full of distortions and deliberate lies. An analysis of the Sri Lankan response would be a subject for a separate article.

Editor's Note: The full text of the intervention by the International Commission of Jurists and an analysis of the Sri Lankan delegation's response will appear in the next issue.

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SINHALESE — THE PROTECTED SPECIES

By VAYAL

In a comprehensive update on the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka ('South', March 1985) the late Mr Denzil Peiris raises several fundamental issues. Some of them merit comment if only for the reason that they have been raised by a person of Mr Peiris's journalistic stature and integrity.

Referring to Mr Jayewardene, he makes the bold assertion that 'the President's commitment to a just solution is unquestionable'. Unfortunately for the Tamils, many of them thought so too in 1977, when Mr Jayewardene's party was returned to power in a landslide victory on a manifesto which included as a priority task the resolution of the problem of the Tamil minority. With a massive majority in Parliament behind him and his personal standing in the country at its peak, with no elections to worry about for five years, Mr Jayewardene was in an infinitely more advantageous position than any of his predecessors to bring about this 'just solution'. Instead of being remembered as the statesman who resolved the most serious problem which the country has ever faced, he chose like most Sinhalese politicians before him, to fall into the mental trap which dictates that any initiative to deal adequately with Tamil grievances undermines the privileged position of the Sinhalese in Sri Lanka.

Popular fallacy

There is a popular fallacy which supports Mr Peiris's view, by claiming that Mr Jayewardene is personally committed to a just solution to the Tamil problem, but extremists both within his party and outside it, notably the Buddhist clergy who are implacably opposed to any concession to Tamil demands, prevent him from actually delivering the goods. Had this explanation been offered for the late Mr Dudley Senanayake, or the Bandaranaikes, it might seem plausible. In a long career, Mr Jayewardene has demonstrated, if not anything else, a tremendous flair for political manoeuvre and dexterity. He is therefore capable of containing the power bases and the opinion forming centres around him. The recent dismisal of Mr Mathew, his Minister of Industries, might have raised a few eyebrows, but not much else.

Whether it is to one's liking or not, he stands out like a Colossus on the Sri Lankan political scene and only he, and no one else, is capable of carrying the Sinhalese electorate in negotiating a settlement of the Tamil problem. To say that he is hedged in by forces around him is to under-estimate his relevance to the Sinhalese political base. But then, even a skilful man like Mr Jayewardene, has not recognised that he is confronted by a different dimension to the Tamil problem, than what his predecessors faced. Having gone through the motions of the All Party Conference, and ascribing its failure to the intransigence of the TULF, he believes he has now erected a backdrop of legitimacy against which he is poised to attempt and justify a military solution to the problem. So much for his commitment to a just solution.

Ensuring civic and human rights

The other important influence in the formulation of the government's approach to the problem is that of Mr Athulathmudali. Mr Peiris quotes him as saying: *'You cannot go down the devolution road. It is not easy to sell.'* Mr Athulathmudali reckons that the emphasis should be on fundamental rights and the use of the courts to eliminate specific cases of discrimination against the minorities. What is not realised is that it is no longer a question of dealing with specific cases of discrimination. It is now a question of ensuring that the Tamils enjoy all the civic and human rights which they are entitled to, but cannot realise within the framework of a unitary state as presently constituted.

Mr Athulathmudali argues that the US courts have played a key role in advancing the rights of the black Americans and other minorities. One might well ask whether the jurisdiction of even the powerful US courts has had any significant impact on the basic status of the black Americans. Quite apart from that, even if the Tamils were to consider the suggestion, they will need an awful lot of convincing to place reliance on a judiciary whose authority has been undermined and whose independence has been permanently impaired by the government's repeated and clumsy efforts at tinkering with the constitution.

Mr Peiris sums up his report with the astute observation that 'the gut issue in the problem is distrust'. No one will seriously disagree with this, particularly as Mr Peiris points out 'the Tamils will not look to Sinhalese goodwill for a resolution of their grievances over employment and settlement. Nor will they depend on a majority Sinhalese army and police force to ensure their personal safety.' But Mr Peiris reserves the thrust of his argument to rationalise Sinhalese distrust of the Tamils. He says: *'More than five centuries of invasions by Tamil kings and marauders are deeply engraved in the psyche of the Sinhalese. Tamil invaders ravaged the Buddhist culture and irrigation systems on which that civilisation was based and forcing the Sinhalese to retreat to the less congenial hills.'*

This curious blend of history and myth, if it was in fact engraved in the Sinhalese psyche, remained dormant for several centuries and would have remained as such (in the same way that the French and English feel about each other) had not the Sinhalese politicians of the post-independence era seen in its revival a less onerous route to electoral power. Thus two generations of young Sinhalese have been nurtured in this defensive psychology, and this is what constitutes a barrier against any rational understanding of the Tamils' requirements. Given the readiness with which the Sinhalese politicians claim 'protected species' status for their people, one can forgive the casual observer of the Sri Lankan scene for being confused as to the identity of the aggrieved party in this conflict.

Fanciful fear

The more plausible basis for Sinhalese fear and distrust is of recent origin and that stems from what the Sinhalese imagine is a potential threat posed by 42 million Tamils in South India. This fear is as fanciful as the fragile hope that the Tamils in Sri Lanka see in it. It is not unnatural for the people of Tamil Nadu to show their concern for the plight of fellow Tamils, particularly now that thousands of them have crossed over to South India to escape the oppression of the Sinhalese army. However, it would be an error of judgement for the Sinhalese politicians to project this concern as a prelude to physical intervention on behalf of the Tamils of Sri Lanka. By the same token, the latter have no grounds on which to expect this wave of sympathy to be translated into something more tangible.

The real impediment to reaching a negotiated settlement of this bruising dispute is the atmosphere of fear and

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MINISTER PROTESTS AGAINST BANDITS AND GANGSTERS BEING SETTLED IN TAMIL AREAS

'It has been brought to my notice that there is a major programme of the Ministry of Lands and Land Development under way in the Vavuniya and Mullaitivu districts for the settlement of ex-convicts and other undesirable elements . . . A very disturbing feature of all these settlement programmes is that the vast majority, if not all, of the settlers are not genuine farmers, but IRCs (Island Re-convicted Criminals) and gangsters in character. Not used to farming and perhaps leading a life of banditry in the South all their lives, these men have been rampaging the district lifting cattle, looting and, on occasions, indulging in arson . . . Several families of Tamil settlers in these areas, unable to bear the harassment any longer, have vacated their farms,' wrote Mr S. Thondaman, Minister of Rural industrial Development, in a recent letter addressed to the Sri Lankan President Mr Junius Jayewardene.

A copy of this nine-page letter typed on the Ministry headed notepaper reached the desk of Tamil Times, having been posted in Colombo by a mole in the Presidential Secretariat. How Mr S. Thondaman can still continue to remain in Mr Jayewardene's Cabinet while his colleagues, particularly Mr Gamini Dissanayake, the Minister of Lands and Land Development, are engaged in a diabolical scheme of dispossessing Tamils of their land is a mystery.

The following are excerpts from Mr Thondaman's letter to the President:

'One of our biggest problems has been the 'Policy' of land development and land settlement adopted by the Ministry of Lands and Land Development. While inviting Your Excellency's attention to the decision of the Cabinet of Ministers of 4th July 1979 set out at paragraph 16 of the Minutes of that Meeting, I annex hereto a copy of my Cabinet Memorandum of 19th July 1983 which sets out the background to the settlement, with government assistance, of persons of Indian origin in the Northern and Eastern provinces and copies of correspondence exchanged between the Hon'ble Minister of Lands and Land Development and myself, the contents of which are self-explanatory.

'One would have imagined that when some of the 'unfortunate victims of the sad events of July 1983 are still languishing in refugee camps in Sri Lanka and South India, the harassment, intimidation and forced eviction of those who escaped the holocaust would end and in its place a humane and orderly re-settlement programme of those affected implemented. Instead we are witnessing the tragic spectacle of misguided individuals continuing to pursue a planned programme of colonisation of a provocative nature which is exacerbating communal tensions, undermining the authority of the Ceylon Workers Congress among the people of recent Indian origin, bringing the UNP government into disrepute and paving the way for its eventual destruction. The Vadamunai episode, where Your Excellency finally came down with a heavy hand, is an example of this type of adventure. Several such cases of an even more explosive nature have been reported to me.

'From time to time during the last one year, I have brought some of these to your attention and I am convinced that if prompt and firm action had been taken, the recent incidents of Vavuniya and Mullaitivu would have been averted and terrorist activity perhaps contained within the Peninsula. I am compelled to bring to your notice once again some of these activities of a provocative nature so that Your Excellency may take action to put an end to this even at this late hour.

Kent and Dollar Farms

'Under the Special Leases programme of the 1963 UNP government, land was leased out to the Kent Farm in Vavuniya and the Dollar Farm in Mullaitivu. Several families of Tamils of Indian origin, who were dumped in this area after the communal disturbances, provided labour to the farm owners. These were joined by others from the plantations after the 1977 and 1981 disturbances and according to my information there were altogether 55 families in these two farms. All these people were driven away early this year by the security forces. Later this year, the farms were taken over by the Government and used by them to settle ex-convicts and other island reconvicted criminals in order to rehabilitate them.

'This forcible ejectment of peaceful families of Tamils of Indian origin from their settlements and state-aided colonisation of ex-convicts and other undesirable elements has not been confined to these two farms alone. It has been extended to other areas in the Vavuniya, Mannar, Mullaitivu and Trincomalee districts. In addition, to the 55 families in the Kent and Dollar farms, 40 families have been uprooted from Vaypangulam and 54 from Pavatkulam.

'It has been brought to my notice that there is a major programme of the Ministry of Lands and Land Development under way in the Vavuniya and Mullaitivu districts for the settlement of ex-convicts and other undesirable elements including the encroachers who were evicted from Vadamunai in Batticaloa. The area to be developed for this settlement presently falls within the AGA district of Nedunkarny. This has recently been included within another GS division which in turn has been incorporated into the Vavuniya South A.G.A. division. The 18-mile road from Padiviya to the Kent Farm is being widened and strengthened. A bridge is also under construction. A senior official of the Ministry is reported to have taken up residence at the site to supervise the operations. The Deputy Minister Mr Percy Samaraweera had also visited the site recently and inspected the progress of work.

Guns for Sinhalese

'I am informed that a programme for the settlement of about 1,000 migrant fishermen and others in the Mullaitivu coastal belt is also being implemented at present. In Kokkilai, some of the guns surrendered by the Tamil farmers last year had apparently been handed over to the Sinhalese fishermen on the instructions of the officials of the Ministry of Fisheries and the security forces. Of late, tension has been building up amongst the fishing community in Mullaitivu due to the harassment of the Tamil fishermen by the armed forces on the one hand and favoured treatment of the migrant fishermen from the South. I also understand that the former Secretary to the Ministry of Fisheries had sought foreign aid to relocate the Devinuwara Fish Net Factory at Mullaitivu with the ultimate objective of organising around the factory a colony of settlers from the South.

'At the same time, on the instructions of the Ministry of Fisheries statistics were being collected, early last month, to settle permanently in Mannar, fishermen from the South who migrate to that area during the season. It was reported that they were to be provided with permanent housing, boats and fishing gear.

'A very disturbing feature of all these settlement programmes is that the vast majority, if not all, of the settlers are not genuine farmers but IRCs and gangsters in character. Not used to farming and perhaps leading a

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U.N. HUMAN RIGHTS

"TAMILS ARE FLEEING SRI LANKA

In the course of two interventions on behalf of Europe Third World Centre (CETIM) before the 41st sessions of the United Nations Human Rights Commission held in Geneva recently (Feb 27 to March 15), Mr P. Rajanayagam referred to the massive violations of human rights in Sri Lanka, including indiscriminate killings of civilian Tamils, arbitrary arrests, detentions and torture. Placing the case of the Tamil people before this United Nations forum attended by over 100 countries and several UN-recognised Non-

The following is the text of the speech made by Mr P. Rajanayagam on February 28 before the UN Human Rights Commission:

Mr Chairman,

The Sub-Commission at its session in August last year expressed deep concern about the recurrence of violence in Sri Lanka with severe loss of life and property. While recognising the ultimate responsibility of the government of Sri Lanka for the protection of all sections of the community, it hoped that the government of Sri Lanka would submit information on the progress made in the investigation of incidents, and the recent efforts made to promote communal harmony to the Commission on Human Rights at its 41st sessions. The concerns expressed by the Sub-Commission seem to have been fully justified by the events that have taken place since August 1984.

The latest report of the Amnesty International released last month records a catalogue of incidents of killing of Tamil civilians, including old men, women and children.

Innocent civilians killed

Following the death of some soldiers in a land mine explosion, the army went on a rampage on August 11 and 12 last year in the northern Tamil town of Mannar, setting fire to an estimated 123 homes and shops and killing several innocent Tamil civilians. The Civil Rights Movement of Sri Lanka, the leading members of which belong to the Sinhalese community, in a comprehensive statment issued last month stated that following the death of a soldier in another land mine explosion, the army engaged in 'a mass attack on the civilians living within three to four miles of the incident, on the passengers of buses plying on this road and on the staff of the Murunkan post office. The final death toll has been estimated at about 107.' Almost all who were killed were over 50 years of age.

'The Amnesty International reports that, despite government denials, there is sufficient evidence to show that these are in fact indiscriminate extrajudicial killings by the security forces. Recently, according to reports of the Amnesty International and the Civil Rights Movement of Sri Lanka, thousands of Tamils falling within the age group of 15 and 30 have been indiscriminately rounded up and detained in army camps where they are subjected to the familiar methods of terror.

A new development in the apparently never-ending campaign of army atrocities is that the Christian clergy would appear to have become its latest target. Within the last two months, a Methodist minister and a Catholic parish priest have been shot and killed. In the case of the Catholic priest, named Rev. Fr. Mary Bastian, he was gunned down in his own church through the window on January 6. Despite detailed eyewitness accounts provided to the authorities by the Catholic Bishops, to date no action would appear to have been taken.

We regret to note that the government has so far failed to undertake an impartial investigation into the July-August 1983 violence in which several hundred Tamils perished and over 200,000 were rendered homeless. The government of Sri Lanka has also failed to institute an impartial judicial investigation into the gruesome massacre of 53 Tamil political prisoners in a Colombo maximum security prison in July 1983. Similarly, several other incidents and rampages in which sections of the security forces had engaged in summary killings of civilian Tamils and the destruction of their property have remained uninvestigated and the culprits have gone unpunished.

Army indiscipline or government policy?

The continued failure on the part of the government to take effective measures to prevent repeated excesses committed by the army against civilians leads one to ask the question as to how much of these excesses are due to the indiscipline of the armed forces and how much of them flow directly from conscious government policy.

Despite this Commission's desire to see the restoration of communal harmony in Sri Lanka, regrettably it would seem that the government of Sri Lanka has decided on a military solution to the ethnic conflict in that country. In November last year the government promulgated a plethora of new Emergency Regulations which have made life in the Tamil areas of the country virtually impossible.

Under these Regulations a Prohibited Zone has been set up along the entire northern coast prohibiting all forms of human habitation and activity. The ban on fishing has deprived several thousands of fishermen of their livelihood. Some of the northern districts have been declared a Security Zone where ownership and use of vehicles of all descriptions, including bicycles, without special permits have been banned and only a few approved roads can be used. All people are compelled to carry identity cards and no one shall leave or enter the Security Zone without special permits. The Civil Rights Movement has summed up the disastrous impact of these regulations as 'destruction of the entire civil life of the community'.

In the meantime, Mr Chairman, the President of Sri Lanka has announced his government's plans to colonise all Tamil areas with Sinhala settlers to reflect the nationwide population ratio of 75 per cent Sinhalese to 25 per cent other ethnic groups. The Minister of National Security has announced plans for the new settlers to be given military training and arms. In fact, in certain areas this has already been done. The Civil Rights Movement has in this connection stated: 'Civilians in the Trincomalee district have been given arms by the police, ostensibly for their self-defence. Instances have been reported of such individuals and groups using arms to terrorise persons of the Tamil community.'

The Citizens Committees of the affected areas have complained of a grave situation and conditions of starvation. The request of international relief agencies to go into the affected areas would appear to have been turned down by the government.

Exodus of refugees

All these conditions have created a vast exodus of refugees from Tamil areas into other countries, particularly to South India. Abandoning their homes, boatloads of people are reported to be landing daily along the coast of South India. Those who are able, are reported to be fleeing to western countries.

'The extent of this exodus of refugees is demonstration of the grossness of the violence, violations and depredations to which the Tamil

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COMMISSION TOLD TO ESCAPE MILITARY TERROR"

Governmental Organisations, Mr Rajanayagam, who is also the Secretary of the Human Rights Council (SCOT), stated that the vast exodus of Tamil refugees into neighbouring South India was demonstrative of the violence, violations and depredations to which the Tamil people are subjected in Sri Lanka today. He accused the government of Sri Lanka of dispossessing Tamils of their homes in areas where they had traditionally lived and inciting civil war by arming sections of the Sinhalese against the Tamil people.

minority are subjected in Sri Lanka today.

During the last sessions of the Commission, the Sri Lankan delegation placed heavy emphasis on the then on-going All Party Conference. Regrettably, Mr Chairman, the government of Sri Lanka would appear to have failed to seize the opportunity given by this Commission. On December 16th, the All Party Conference was formally wound up and subsequently the government abandoned even the meagre proposals it had earlier placed before the Conference. The Tamil political party, TULF, although it did accept the government's proposals, had declared that it was prepared to continue to negotiate a settlement on the basis of a recognition of the legitimate aspirations of the Tamil people.

In this context, Mr Chairman, taking into consideration the concerns expressed by the Sub-Commission, we urge that this Commission should consider taking such steps as are necessary for the protection of human rights and restoration of inter-communal justice and peace in Sri Lanka.

I thank you, Mr Chairman.

The following is the text of the speech made by Mr P. Rajanayagam before the UN Human Rights Commission on March 8, 1985.

Mr Chairman,

Our organisation intervened under Item 19 on the gross violation of human rights in Sri Lanka. Even as we meet in the safe and salubrious surroundings of Geneva, the situation in Sri Lanka is rapidly deteriorating for the people, particularly the Tamil community.

Mr Chairman, without further ado, I seek to demonstrate the seriousness of the situation by quoting from three on-the-spot reports. The London 'Daily Telegraph' of December 12, 1984, reported:

'Sri Lankan armed forces had unleashed a bloody campaign of terror . . .' and '. . . are committing the most grotesque crimes away from international notice . . . Jaffna may be only 300 miles north of Colombo, but it is a world apart. It is under siege. The 800,000 inhabitants of the peninsula live in the shadow of murder, arson, bombings and looting . . . As the first foreign reporter to reach Jaffna . . . I have spent three days listening to a series of appalling stories of rape, massacre and intimidation. I saw two bodies lying in the fields at Vaddukoddai eight miles west of Jaffna. Dr Neelan Tiruchelvam, a former MP for the area, claimed troops shot dead 40 civilians last week.'

Again the London 'Times' of 31 December, 1984, reported:

'Sri Lankan forces are conducting a harsh and remorseless campaign of intimidation among the island's Tamil minority. By means of random murder, indiscriminate shooting, beatings, torture and plunder, ill-disciplined and trigger-happy soldiers keep the Tamils in the north in a state of constant fear.

Many thousands of people, mostly women and children, have fled to India and to Europe. Thousands of youths have been rounded up and held in army camps. Their parents do not know where they are: they have become Sri Lanka's disappeared ones. There is strong evidence of beating, torture and murder of young men in army custody. Meanwhile, thousands of displaced people, driven from their homes in army "combing out" operations, are in refugee camps.'

Mr Chairman, the American 'Time' magazine of February 11 this year, which was banned from circulation in Sri Lanka, reported:

'In the north, evidence of destruction by the military is everywhere. Temples and churches have been desecrated. In the past month, a Roman Catholic priest and a Methodist minister were gunned down by government forces. Residents say the worst savagery occurred in Mannar in December following the ambush of an army patrol by guerrillas. "The soldiers began shooting at anyone they saw," reports one eyewitness. "People died like flies. The soldiers went out on the road, killing some people on the spot and taking others away. They went to the Post Office and made people line up before they shot them. Then they went looking for people in the paddy fields. No one was spared. It was a scene out of hell." The massacre began at 11 in the morning and ended at 4.30 in the afternoon. When it was over, more than 150 people had been killed.'

The fleeing thousands

This is the tragedy that is being enacted in Sri Lanka today. The Amnesty International and the International Commission of Jurists in their reports and in their interventions yesterday have given graphic accounts of the massive violations of human rights, including the most fundamental of all human rights, the right to life. Even as I speak, Mr Chairman, thousands of Tamil people, not militants or 'terrorists', but ordinary civilians, old people, young people, women and children are fleeing the country from the uncontrolled terror of the Sri Lankan security forces.

Thousands of people are being forcibly dispossessed of their homes and driven off areas in which they have lived for over 2,000 years. On a personal note, Mr Chairman, my own family, including my wife's 70-year-old mother have abandoned their home situated in the town of Mannar and disappeared. The army had threatened that if they did not leave, the house would be set on fire with all of them inside. Hopefully, they are on a boat for South India, where they have no relatives or friends. Possibly they may join the thousands in makeshift refugee camps there. I received this information from my wife who telephoned me from London the night before last. Last night when I conveyed this tragic news to the distinguished Sri Lankan delegate to this Commission, he expressed his sympathy. I suppose the battered and downtrodden Tamil people must be thankful for and content with these small mercies of expressions of sympathy!

The Government of Sri Lanka, in its Note Verbale date 30th January 1984 (E/CN.4/1984/10, 1 February 1984) distributed to the delegates to the Human Rights Commission at its 40th sessions, inter alia, stated:

'The Government of Sri Lanka is fully committed to strengthening of national unity by promoting co-operation and mutual understanding among all people of Sri Lanka . . . as a part of this process, in January 1984, the President of Sri Lanka summoned a conference of all political parties representing various ideologies and ethnic groups, with a view to discussing the relevant issues and proposals concerning the rights of the minorities and finding solutions acceptable to all parties concerned within the democratic framework of the country . . . *in this context, the constructive approach of the internation[illegible] com-*

PLEASE TURN OVER

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TAMIL REFUGEES ARRIVING IN THEIR THOUSANDS

The following is the text of the speech made by Dr G.S. Dhillon, the leader of the Indian delegation to the 41st sessions of the UN Human Rights Commission, on March 8, 1985.

Mr Chairman,

When the Human Rights Commission discussed the situation in Sri Lanka last year, there was a certain measure of optimism that the ethnic problem would be resolved through suitable political means. This was reflected in the resolution adopted by the Commission which welcomed all measures for rehabilitation and reconciliation, including the All Parties Conference, and expressed the hope that they would succeed in achieving a lasting solution. Mr Chairman, these hopes have, unfortunately, been belied. Today, as we meet, we find that the prospect of a political solution has receded very far. The All Parties Conference convened by President Jayewardene has been adjourned sine die without achieving any substantive progress and no fresh initiative has been undertaken. The failure so far to reach a political settlement and the rupture in the dialogue with the minority Tamil community has created a climate of confrontation rather than conciliation, and has led to a growing spiral of violence and counter-violence which has claimed the lives of many innocent people. In the violence that rocked Sri Lanka in March, April, August, November and December 1984 several hundreds have died.

Organised colonisation

Over the past few months the everyday lives of ordinary citizens, particularly in the North and East, have been adversely affected. Following the imposition of a security zone in the Jaffna Peninsula, movement of persons and vehicles has been restricted. There are reports of an acute shortage of food and thousands of fisherfolk have been unable to ply their trade and are now without any means of livelihood. Recent reports of organised colonisation of the Northern and Eastern Provinces have added to the friction between different communities. Such an atmosphere, Mr Chairman, breeds hate and fear — and these are emotions which are not conducive to creating the atmosphere necessary for finding a solution to the problem.

We in India are particularly saddened by these developments; for Sri Lanka is a close neighbour and one with whom we have had the friendliest of relations. Our interest is not just of a spectator. We cannot remain detached because the ethnic problem in Sri Lanka has repercussions on our country and imposes severe social, political and economic burdens on us.

People of Sri Lanka and India have contacts and ties which date back millenia. There are over 200,000 Indian nationals in Sri Lanka who have been affected by the ethnic crisis, apart from the very large number of persons of Indian origin. We are naturally concerned about the well-being of our citizens.

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munity is to desist from any action or comment on the situation in Sri Lanka.'

It is in the above context, and the various assurances given by the Sri Lankan delegation, the Commission at its 40th Session desisted from examining the serious complaints of violation of human rights in Sri Lanka, and appealed for and welcomed all measures for national harmony and reconciliation.

Government inciting civil war

The various assurances given by the Government of Sri Lanka have not been kept, the All Party Conference (APC) has been terminated without a settlement having been reached to the ethnic conflict. Even before the APC was formally wound up on December 16, the Government announced its plans for settling Sinhala people in predominantly Tamil areas of the North and East to reflect the nation-wide population ratio of 75 per cent Sinhalese to 25 per cent other ethnic groups. Mr Chairman, this can hardly be an act of a government which was serious about the resolution of the ethnic problem through decentralisation.

The government also announced plans for training and arming the Sinhalese newly settled in Tamil areas. In fact, pictures appeared in the Sri Lankan press showing the Minister of National Security giving lessons to some new settlers in the use of guns. This act of arming one section of the people as against another minority section of the population can hardly constitute an act in furtherance of reconciliation and harmony between the two communities. On the contrary, what the government has done is deliberate incitement and encouragement to civil war.

In his long intervention, the distinguished delegate from Sri Lanka, never even attempted to rebut the several charges by Amnesty International and the International Commission of Jurists of gross violations of human rights including the charge of summary executions of innocent civilians. An attempt was made to cloak the flagrant abuses of human rights in Sri Lanka under the pretext of combatting terrorism. Labelling and maligning organisations and individuals concerned with the protection of human rights as supporters or confederates of 'terrorists' is a familiar exercise indulged in by those governments which want to cover up their abuse of human rights.

The issue of human rights violations in Sri Lanka will no doubt be considered again at the 42nd sessions of this Commission. Many member and observer countries have already expressed sympathy during these sessions to the plight of the affected people in Sri Lanka. Sympathy, Mr Chairman, was in plentiful supply. But sympathy alone will not suffice.

Cries of agony & desperation

Mr Chairman, I have been listening to lengthy speeches studded with beautiful phrases from distinguished delegates from both member and observer countries about how this commission should protect basic human rights of people throughout the world. May I respectfully submit that speeches and conceptual expositions and discourses on human rights mean nothing to a people whose cries of agony and desperation do not find a way to move this august forum to concrete action.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights in its 3rd Preamble stated that, 'it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human right should be protected by the rule of law' And that protection must be in actual practice and not in the glossy handouts of the United Nations or of its member countries. If it were not the case, and a people's inalienable human rights and fundamental freedoms are continued to be violated in the most flagrant manner, with the international community remaining on the sidelines as a silent spectator, then such people are bound to lose confidence in the rule of law and adopt whatever course they may deem appropriate to defend their rights and freedoms.'

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The growing insecurity of the minority community in Sri Lanka has affected us in other ways. There has been a sudden spurt in the influx of refugees from Sri Lanka since early February 1985. These refugees are Sri Lankan Tamils, most of them fishermen who are fleeing their country and arriving on the coast of Tamil Nadu, in whatever type of boats are available to them. The number of refugees who have arrived has already exceeded 6,000 and there is no sign of abatement. The conditions in northern part of Sri Lanka are believed to have deteriorated to such an extent that Tamils are finding it difficult to continue to stay there.

It may be recalled that we already have in India around 50,000 Sri Lankan refugees and further influx places severe strain on us. Although the government of India has provided shelter to these unfortunate refugees on humanitarian grounds they cannot be expected to live permanently in our country. Uprooted as they are from their homes, families and occupations these refugees feel an acute sense of frustration and their agony is compounded by the knowledge that in the foreseeable future they cannot go back in honour and safety.

'UPROOTED AS THEY ARE FROM THEIR HOMES, FAMILIES AND OCCUPATIONS, THESE REFUGEES FEEL AN ACUTE SENSE OF FRUSTRATION AND THEIR AGONY IS COMPOUNDED BY THE KNOWLEDGE THAT IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE THEY CANNOT GO BACK IN HONOUR AND SAFETY'

Far-fetched allegations

Mr Chairman, in view of some far-fetched allegations made in Sri Lanka about the policy and attitude of my Government, I would like to state that the Indian people and Government have no interest in exacerbating the ethnic problem in Sri Lanka. Ethnic tension in that country has adverse consequences for us. We have, rather, a vital stake in a resolution of Sri Lanka's ethnic problem as early as possible. Mr Chairman, no one would be more pleased than us if the Sri Lankan government succeeded in creating conditions which would ensure amity and harmonious relations between different ethnic communities. This would facilitate the return to Sri Lanka of those Sri Lankan nationals who have felt compelled to seek shelter in our country.

As you know, Mr Chairman, the problems which have led to the current ethnic crisis of Sri Lanka have been serious and have festered over the years. At the time of the 40th Session of the Commission, the Sri Lankan government also appeared to favour a constructive political approach and invited all parties and groups to sit together at the conference table to discuss and evolve a solution to this crucial issue.

This was in January 1984. Various proposals were put forward during the course of the Conference and in late 1984 President Jayewardene introduced draft legislation providing for some measure of devolution. The Tamils felt that these measures were insufficient but were prepared to continue discussions to see how the differences could be bridged. However, towards the end of December 1984, the Government withdrew the legislation and terminated the dialogue.

In the absence of any dialogue there has been a fresh eruption of ethnic violence. When groups of people cease to talk to each other, when no channels of communication are open, apprehensions, distortions and distrust tend to grow. What is needed, Mr Chairman, is not the cold barrier of silence but the warmth of dialogue. We hope that fresh efforts will be made by the Sri Lankan government to seek a political solution. There is, Mr Chairman, no other alternative.

The following are excerpts from the Indian delegate's statement made on March 12 in reply to the Sri Lankan delegate's statement:

It is a matter of deep dismay for my delegation that in his statement made on last Friday night, the distinguished representative of Sri Lanka did not appreciate the spirit in which we made our statement. Our intention was to express our anguish at the ethnic situation in Sri Lanka and was motivated by our deep desire to see an amelioration of the situation within the framework of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Sri Lanka and by our intention to extend all possible co-operation for this purpose. In the same spirit I would like to respond very briefly to some of the points raised by the distinguished representative of Sri Lanka in order to set the record right.

50,000 refugees

The Sri Lankan representative has questioned the authenticity of the fact mentioned by us in our statement that over 50,000 Tamils, who are Sri Lankan nations, have sought refuge in India since the eruption of ethnic violence in Sri Lanka in July 1983. He remarked that these figures should be viewed with great caution. He also contended that an artificial refugee situation was being created for ulterior purposes. These are stock arguments which Governments have used in the past in the face of their inability to contain the exodus of refugees. It is difficult to believe that thousands of poor and ordinary people who are struggling for survival would leave their hearths and homes and stay uprooted in another country unless they feared for their life and property.

The fact remains that a large influx of refugees has taken place and this influx is continuing unabated. According to the latest figures, since the first week of February this year nearly 15,000 Tamils from Sri Lanka have fled to India. My Government has had to cope with the problem of providing them food and shelter and the political, social and economic tensions that their presence has generated. The pathetic plight of these people who have been forced by circumstances to become refugees has been well-documented in the international media.

Qualitatively different

The distinguished representative of Sri Lanka has referred to the situation in the state of Punjab. I would not like to dwell on this point beyond stating that the situation in Sri Lanka is, in fact, qualitatively different from that prevailing in the Punjab, where all communities, including Sikhs, enjoy full political, economic and cultural rights.

Mr Chairman, I would like to end by reiterating once more what my Government has said on many occasions — namely that we in India are opposed to separatism, secession and all forms of violence. We have no truck with terrorism and can have no interest, whatsoever, in exacerbating ethnic tension in Sri Lanka. We have on the other hand a deep and abiding interest in restoration of communal amity in Sri Lanka. Since the beginning, my Government has impressed on all concerned the necessity of finding a political solution within the framework of the unity and integrity of Sri Lanka. I am glad that the Sri Lankan representative has affirmed that his Government is committed to such a solution. I would not like to say more because consultations are under way between our two Governments for defusing the situation so that a climate conducive to a political settlement is created.

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EXODUS: Every day, thousands of terrified Tamils flee Sri Lanka.

Traumatised by the genocide unleashed by the army, and a cruel civil war that has scarred the emerald isle and taken the republic to the very brink, these people have abandoned their homes and homesteads, painfully built over the years. Their destination is across the Palk Straits. In India. Where they seek refuge and hope to rebuild their shattered lives. In the process, these refugees have created a situation not unlike the Bangladesh crisis. K P Sunil reports from Rameswaram on the boat people.

"They are not human beings," wailed an aging woman. "They are brutes....worse than animals....man-eaters...." She was not airing a personal opinion. But voicing the sentiments of thousands of others, who, like her, have braved innumerable hazards during a perilous cross-over from the island republic of Sri Lanka to the more hospitable shores of India. They are Tamils. Sri Lankan citizens who have lived for ages on that country's soil. People with no roots here, now looking up to India for asylum on humanitarian grounds. Refugees from the violence and repression directed against them by the Sinhalese people and the Sri Lankan government through its security forces.

Rameswaram, a small coastal town in Tamil Nadu, is teeming with thousands who cross over in large numbers each day. In little fibre glass boats. In precarious country vessels. In large motorised launches. Entire villages of Tamils—old men and women, youth, children—are all coming to India, bearing marks of months of agony and suffering. The trauma, both physical and mental, is there for all to see in their drawn faces and hunted looks. For they are people who have witnessed their womenfolk being raped. People who have seen their kith and kin tortured and killed. People who have lost their all to the marauding Sinhalese mobs and military. Victims of an *ethnic* conflict that has converted Sri Lanka from a soothing Shangri-La on the Indian Ocean to a maelstrom of violence.

Forty-five-year-old Parvathy looks much older. She used to work as a maid in a rich Tamil's house near Pesaalai in north-western Sri Lanka. She was deserted by her husband years ago, soon after their daughter Lakshmi was born. Lakshmi is now 16 years old. Last month as the two were working in the kitchen they were shocked to see the house suddenly filled with army men. (The men were away at work.) The jawans pushed away the children, trampled on them with heavy regulation boots and set about gang-raping the women. Parvathy and Lakshmi, unnoticed in the kitchen, jumped out of the window and ran away. Parvathy, thereafter, became a nervous wreck. She was scared stiff to even venture close to her employer's house and does not know what happened to them. Lakshmi and she starved for days without work. And

Parvathy, a maid-servant

Sarojini, a farmworker

when neighbouring fishermen started talking of escaping to India, managed to join them and cross over in a little plastic boat—meant for 6 persons into which over twenty had got in. They had absolutely no belongings and looked up to India—its people and government—for help. "I will never go back," she shouts out emphatically. "I will not go back even if things become quiet there. I would rather lead a poverty-stricken life in India. I am willing to work. If you people try to send me back to Sri Lanka I will run away."

Horrendous deeds

Sarojini, clutches an empty plastic bag to her bosom. It is the only possession she has in this world. Until recently she had been an agricultural worker in the village of Maanthai barely 10 kilometres from Mannar. Only four kilometres away from Maanthai is an army camp. The scene of several horrendous deeds. Sarojini was returning home from the fields one evening. With her was her 14-year-old nephew. As they stopped at a wayside shop for a drink, they heard the sound of

Yograj Nanattan, a fisherman

approaching army jeeps. One of which screeched to a halt in front of the shop. An armyman in uniform jumped out and came towards them. He shouted at the boy to hold out his hands, palms facing upwards. There were calluses on the palms, the gain of toil on the fields. The armyman felt these. "So you are a little Tiger cub, are you?" he thundered. The

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boy stuttered a denial. Reaching into the shop the man took out a soda water bottle. He broke it against a railing and using its sharp edges gouged out the screaming boy's eyes. He swooned in a pool of blood. None of the passers-by dared to help—the other armymen stood waiting for exactly such a move, guns in their hands. Sarojini passed out. When she regained consciousness she learnt that the boy had bled to death. The boy had been her only relative.

Raving lunatics

There were rumours that some persons in the fishing village of Pesaalai some distance away were likely to make a break for safety. To India. Sarojini walked all the way to Pesaalai. And from there managed to get into a boat bound for India. She landed at Rameswaram, clutching a little plastic bag to her bosom—her only worldly possession. She shudders at the thought of going back. "Never," she shrieked. The place is a mad house. The people are raving lunatics. If you people don't want us here in India, shoot us. Kill us. But please don't send us back." But not all refugees wish to stick on here. There are others who are willing to go back when normalcy returns. When the atmosphere of fear is removed. People like forty-year-old launch-owner Yograj Nanattan of Pesaalai for instance.

Yograj is a reasonably well-to-do fisherman. He had been scared by the atmosphere of doom that hung over the entire Tamil area. And so he moved with his family to India. In his own motor launch. Carrying with him all his movable possessions including a colour T V set. He had been unaffected by the riots until recently. But then the Sri Lankan authorities issued an order. No fishermen could go fishing more than 100 metres from the shore. Those violating the order were shot by the navy. This order virtually strangled the fishing community who had to live without a catch for days. All their meagre savings had been used up and the only way out was to flee the country. Yogaraj started in his launch. In addition to his family members, there were about thirty others, mainly fishermen, who worked under him. "I shall go back when peace returns," says Yograj. "I shall start my fishing operations once again. But all of us look up to India now. You have to ensure that peace returns to our land. Our boys, the Tigers, are valiantly fighting to make our land free. We want India to support them. That is all we ask from you." When asked about his opinion of India, Yograj was

Selvaraj, a shop-owner

philosophical. "Well, the people here are good...very kind. The government is also doing its bit for us, though not much. They are only giving us some utensils, a mat and some other basic articles. You see, I am a reasonably well-to-do person there and am accustomed to much more. I am not asking for luxuries but your government could do a bit more for us." He is indifferent about India's own impoverished economy. He waves aside the large body of Indians who exist below the poverty line. "We have suffered a lot. We have lost everything we possessed. You should help us."

Fortunately, not all the refugees are dissatisfied with the treatment meted out to them. "We are refugees," says Selvaraj a shop-owner from Talaimannar. "We have been virtually chased away from our own land and should be prepared to face anything here. The Indians have been very kind to us. We will not overstay our welcome. We have come here only because of the military excesses against us and are quite willing to go back as soon as northern Sri Lanka becomes peaceful."

Tale of woe

Selvaraj too had a tale of woe to narrate. He had been a shop-owner in Talaimannar dealing in varied goods from provisions to cosmetics. He had under him a number of Tamil boys to mind the shop. He recalls that last December some army personnel came to his shop. They asked him and his boys to show them their identity cards, which, when shown, they promptly tore up. Then they started beating the boys with belts and laathis claiming they were Tigers. They hit Selvaraj accusing him of harbouring dangerous terrorists in his shop. And finally departed taking one of the boys with them. It was later learnt that this boy had been taken to the Talaimannar military camp for terrorists, reputed to be one of the worst places of torture in the land.

Selvaraj, making use of several political connections, ultimately obtained an order from President Jayewardene himself permitting him to visit the boy. Brandishing the order, Selvaraj went to the dreaded camp. The authorities, on seeing the letter, asked him to first sign a document stating that he had met the person concerned. Then they asked him to leave. "I have got an order from the president saying that I can meet this boy. So you must let me see him," he demanded. "Yes," laughed the officials. "And we have got it, in your own handwriting that you have already seen him. Now you may go." Realising the futility of the situation Selvaraj went away. Two days later a military jeep stopped outside Selvaraj's shop. The body of the boy was thrown out of it and the vehicle sped away. Selvaraj was struck dumb. He deserted his shop and with his family and employees went to Pesaalai. From there, he obtained seats in a launch at the rate of Rs 50 per head, and fled to India. "I liked Sri Lanka," he says. "My business was good. And I shall be happy to go back as soon as peace returns to the place. Until then, we are at your mercy."

Eujeniu Kulas, a 27-year-old youth was one of the most vociferous of the refugees at Mandapam. "Young men cannot walk the roads of Sri Lanka," he said. "They think that all young Tamils are Tigers and terrorists. The Tigers are gaining in strength and the Sinhalese are terri-

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fied of them. The army and police are unable to accomplish anything against the terrorists. That is why they are directing their wrath against us. We are innocent. But we are Tamils. Even children are not spared. Children, they say, are the Tigers of the future. In Mannar, some months ago they rounded up about 10 boys, and herded them in a truck to a nearby camp. They disappeared thereafter. According to information received from Tamils who have managed to escape from the camp the boys were bundled in gunny bags and set afire. Alive.

A. Royton, a student

Using petrol and old car tyres. This is how cruel they are. A pregnant women was accosted on the streets by a police petrol. "You have a Tiger cub inside you. We will finish him," they shouted. They slit the woman's stomach with knives. The woman screamed. She bled to death in front of several persons. But none dared to come to her help. We could not stand it any longer. We did the only thing we could do—cross over to India. We will go back. We will work hard and make our land the best in the world. We are capable of that. But first we should have a land which we can call our own. Our boys (the Tigers) are doing their best to make this dream come true. And we also look up to you Indians for help. Don't believe a word of what they say over the Sri Lankan radio. Except the time mentioned at the beginning of a programme all the rest are blatant lies."

Holy precincts

A Royton was an 18-year-old student at the St Xavier's College in Mannar. He is today a refugee in the Mandapam camp, having given up his studies to flee to India. To be away from Sinhalese atrocities. "We are not safe even in the college chapel," he says. "A Tamil father in the chapel of a neighbouring college was killed by army men within the holy precincts itself. His crime was that there were several boys in his room. They were his students. But the armymen claimed that they were terrorists. These boys were brutally tortured. And shot dead. They first slit the veins on their forearms with blades. They started bleeding and screaming in pain and fear. Then they were lined up against a wall and shot. They are inhuman, these army personnel. I ran away from my hostel. I walked for three days through the jungles, avoiding the main roads which are used only by army vehicles. I went to Talaimannar where my father is a revenue official in the government. He took me and my younger sister to Pesaalai from where boats were going to India. He stayed back with mother and sent us in one of them. We now look up to you to bring our parents safely across."

Eujeniu Kulas, a 27-year-old youth

Dharmakulasingham is a journalist. The Mannar district correspondent for two Sri Lankan Tamil newspapers—the Colombo-based *Dhinapathi* and the Jaffna-based *Eelanadu*. He has crossed over to India by boat from Pesaalai with his wife, Jeevabhavani, and his two daughters. As a journalist he

Dharmakulasingham, a journalist

had been in close touch with the Sri Lankan situation and was able to provide a comprehensive picture. "It all started with the Tigers' attack on the Chavakachcheri police station near Jaffna in the third week of November, last year. It completely destroyed the morale of the Sri Lankan armed forces. Ever since they have been trying to regain their confidence. By attacking innocent Tamils all over the place. They are too scared to take on the Tigers. All the so-called terrorists shot by the police and army are actually innocent Tamil youths. When the parents of those killed came forward to receive the body of their dead son, the authorities made them sign a paper stating that they were receiving the body of their son who was a terrorist—a Tiger. Most people were uneducated and used to sign the paper without even knowing the contents. Then flourishing this signed statement the officials periodically visit the houses of the victims saying that they suspect more terrorists to be hidden there. They harass and rape the women and torture the children. And shoot anyone who dares to protest.

Atrocities and tortures

"You people will shudder at some of the atrocities and tortures perpetrated by those lunatics. They used to line up small school boys on the ground and trample them. And rejoice as the poor chaps scream and writhe in pain. Youths are herded into large gunny bags and sewn up. Then they pour petrol over the bundle and burn it along with its live

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contents. Women are beaten up mercilessly and gang-raped. After their lust has been satisfied they were shot like dogs. Many people, unable to tolerate the atrocities any longer fled to the jungles. Then the army helicopters come into operation. They spray acid over the forests. This begins to burn the skin and unable to stand it any longer the people come out of the forests only to be shot by waiting troops.

"Most of us who have come to India have experienced little difficulty on the way. Nobody tried to intercept us. Maybe the navy wants us to leave Sri Lanka for ever. Then they can loot our belongings and do whatever they want without even a token protest. Also, the fishermen transporting us are experts. They know the lay of the waters extremely well. They brought us along a route which had shallow waters throughout. No navy vessel would dare to come to those areas as they would run into navigational problems and also their vessels may get grounded."

Left to an uncertain fate

Monica Croos with her newborn baby

Indian dilemma

The internal problem of Sri Lanka has suddenly become an Indian dilemma. Every refugee is being fed for a few days at state expense. They are being supplied with two sarees, two *dhoties*, uniforms for children, basic utensils, a hurricane lantern, a mat and a blanket (totally valued at over Rs 650 per set.) Fortnightly doles of Rs 55 for the head of each family and Rs 27.50 for each additional member (slightly less in the case of children), are also being made with which to subsist. Special ration cards are issued and under it they are provided with rice at 57 paise a kilo (market price around Rs 3.50 per kilo) and firewood at 40 paise a kilo (market price Rs 3.00 a kilo). And all this is certainly going to be a major drain on India's tottering economy.

According to Naresh Gupta, the special officer in charge of the refugee camps in Rameswaram and Mandapam, the government is taking steps to avert some of the contingencies by issuing family identity cards (with photographs). "This would enable authorities to identify families at the time of repatriation," he said. Another safeguard taken is to send batches of about 1000 refugees to every district in Tamil Nadu to reduce the concentration of refugees in any one area. But these procedures are again fraught with difficulties. Several hundreds of families had already been despatched to the various districts even before the issue of identity cards. How are they to be enumerated? What can be done to prevent unscrupulous elements from tagging on to the refugees to derive governmental benefits? What is the fate of children who are born after landing in India? (One woman, Monica Croos, had already delivered a baby boy at the Mandapam camp hospital on February 16. The number of pregnant women in the camp is so large that an entire block close to the hospital has been set aside for them.) Also charges of corruption and misappropriation of funds meant for relief work by the officials have been reported to the press by the refugees themselves. In the present uncontrollable situation, what can be done about such charges? These and other posers stare us in the eye and solutions are not easily forthcoming.

In the meantime, the Sri Lankan government has accused India of harbouring terrorists(Liberation Tigers). Of providing them with refuge for conducting training camps. Of providing them with weapons and firearms to be directed against the government. All these charges have been repeatedly and emphatically refuted by the Indian government. And while all these accusations and counter-accusations are going on, more and more innocent lives are being lost. More and more persons are being displaced. India is being swamped with refugees. Persons with Sri Lankan citizenship and identity cards issued by the Sri Lankan government. On the other hand lakhs of stateless plantation workers who should have been repatriated to India long ago (under the Srimavo-Shastri Pact) still remain in Sri Lanka. With no hope of salvation in the near future.

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CRIMES THAT ARE AN AFFRONT TO CONSCIENCE OF MANKIND

JANUARY 9, 1985

Achchuvely – civilians killed: At least three civilians have been killed in addition to the several injured in an attack launched by the armed forces allegedly on a hideout of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. Three dead bodies have been handed over at the Jaffna hospital. These include that of Vallipuruam Arumugam (56 years), of Paththameni, an uncle of the ex-Chairman of the Jaffna District Development Council. Fortyseven-year-old K. Mayilu and 13-year-old S. Balakumar have been treated at the Jaffna hospital for gun-shot injuries.

639 youths still alive at Boosa: It is believed that 535 Tamil youths are still held alive at the Boosa army camp in the south of Sri Lanka. They are held without any inquiries being held about them. They are part of the several thousands who were shipped from the Tamil-speaking areas to Colombo. A further batch of 104 Tamil youths against whom inquiries were held in Jaffna were brought to Boosa.

JANUARY 10, 1985

Catholic cemetery desecrated: The Jaffna Bishops Palace has complained to the Government Agent and the Police Superintendent of Jaffna that in the early hours of the morning at least ten bodies were brought into the St Mary's cemetery, piled up in three lots and set on fire. The semi-charred remains of these unidentifiable bodies were seen in the morning, with bare feet coated with reddish brown soil. Only burials are done at this cemetery and it is believed that the illegal cremations were carried out by the armed forces and that the dead were Tamil civilians.

Six more helicopters: Six more 'Bell' type helicopters are to be put into use in the north of Sri Lanka from April this year. These new helicopters which are fitted with sophisticated communication systems are capable of carrying at least 12 soldiers.

Recover my son's body: The mother of Rev. Father Mary Bastian, who was brutally killed by the security forces at Vankalai, has appealed to the US government to recover his body and hand it over to her. The mother, Mrs N.V. Manuelpillai, who resides in the USA, had her application to the US government forwarded through Mr Sri Thillaiampalam, President of the Eelam Tamils Association based in New York.

JANUARY 11, 1985

Civilians killed at Vavuniya: Sinnathamby Kanapathipillai (56 years) and his son Krishnakumar (23 years) of Maniankulam, Vavuniya, were shot dead by the armed forces outside their home. Mr Kanapathipillai was the former village Council Chairman of the area and had rendered immense service to his village. He and his son had stepped out of their home on hearing gun shots and were promptly executed by the forces.

Mental patient killed: A mental patient by the name of Somu who usually haunts the Jaffna bus stand was shot and killed by the armed forces.

JANUARY 15, 1985

Civilians killed at Mannar: An army patrol proceeding along the Mannar–Poohagari road opened fire and killed two innocent pedestrians. It was later claimed by the government that two terrorists had been shot dead.

Arms training for Sinhalese fishermen: Sinhalese fishermen from the Naayaru and Kokkilai villages of the Mullaitivu district are being given training in the use of guns at a camp in Negombo. The National Security Minister, Mr Lalith Athulathmudali, who visited the camp today expressed great satisfaction at the training in progress.

JANUARY 16, 1985

Children, women among 15 killed: Two chilren and two women (one of them 8 months pregnant), were among 15 civilians killed in a shower of artillery fire by the troops on a house at Kaattu Vinayagar Koyil Road, Mulliyavalai, seven miles off Mullaitivu today. Later on in the day police recovered 15 bullet-ridden bodies from the house. Nine bodies have been identified: Suppan Sinnan (41 years), Mrs Annaletchumy Suppan Sinnan (35 years), Pillaiyinar Selladurai Kumarasamy (35 years), Mrs Vijayakumari Kumarasamy (30 years – pregnant 8 months), Kandappu Nagaratnam (42 years), Selladurai Navaratnam (37 years), Thayaparan (14 years), Thambiah Vivekanandan (15 years) and Thambiah Balasubramaniam (39 years).

During this incident, troops also set fire to eight houses in the area.

Fleeing refugees shot at: 23 refugees who were fleeing to India by boat from Myliddy in the Jaffna district were shot at by the Sri Lankan navy, resulting in the death of Miss Vijayaluxmi Perumal (15 years). A 10-month-old infant T. Thasavarman, Swaminathar Thambirajah (65 years), and Thurairajah Selvaratnarajah (38 years) suffered gunshot injuries. Nineteen were arrested and taken in for questioning by the Navy. The refugees were Indian rubber plantation workers who were displaced by the July 1983 pogrom and settled down at Myliddy to do fishing. The coastal no-man's area regulations and other brutal emergency laws imposed by the government had rendered them redundant. After starving for 15 days, they had taken the decision to escape to India by boat.

JANUARY 18, 1985

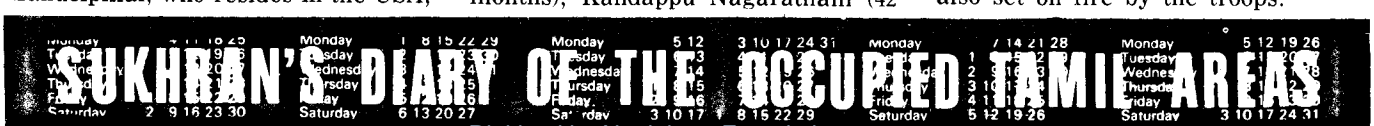
250 youths arrested at Myliddy: Armed forces swooped down on Myliddy today and took away as captives 250 innocent Tamil youths. During the operation, 20-year-old Ratnasingam Anandarajah suffered gun-shot injuries.

Chettikulam killing: The army opened fire at Chettikulam in the Vavuniya district and killed 45-year-old Johupillai Arulappu. There was no provocation whatsoever for the incident.

JANUARY 19, 1985

65-year-old lady shot dead – troops shoot at passenger coach: Troops went on the rampage at Kilinochchi shooting indiscriminately. They also opened fire at a jam-packed passenger coach plying from Thunukkai to Jaffna, killing 65-year-old Mrs Rajadurai Sellammah (65 years) on the spot and injuring Kandiah Kumarasamy (65 years), Sivapathasunderam (40 years), Ponnambalam Ponnudurai (40 years), Kathiramalai Selvamalar (32 years) and six others.

Several houses in Kilinochchi were also set on fire by the troops.



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Babies killed by troops' gunfire: Troops on board an oil train passing through Kilinochchi, opened fire on settlements on either side, killing two babies of Mr Pararajasegeram who were playing outside their house. This incident took place near the 155th mile post at Kilinochchi.

JANUARY 21, 1985

Five killed at Kilinochchi: The armed forces went on the rampage at Kilinochchi today and in three separate incidents five civilians were shot dead. At Karadipoakku three were killed, one at the bus-stand and another on the main road. The dead were identified as P. Mahalingasivam (40 years), T. Sri Kantharoopan (27 years), Perinparajah (32 years), T. Navaratnarajah (24 years), and Ravi (17 years).

Five killed, four injured at Point Pedro: An army patrol driving through Point Pedro this afternoon opened fire indiscriminately as it went along killing five innocent pedestrians and injuring four others.

JANUARY 22, 1985

More shootings at Kilinochchi: An armoured car opened fire at civilians at Iyakachchi in the Kilinochchi area, killing one civilian and grievously injuring two others.

Highway robbery by troops: A passenger bus plying from Jaffna to Kilinochchi was stopped at Iyakachchi by troops and 'searched'. At the end of the search, the troops had in their possession all the wrist-watches, purses and gold chains belonging to the passengers!

Enter: pistol-packing fishermen! The government announced today that it had despatched to the controversial fishing villages of Kokkilai and Nayaru in the Mullaitivu district, a division of the army to make arrangements for the arrival shortly of armed and military trained Sinhalese fishermen settlers!

JANUARY 25, 1985

Commandos kill four youths: Police commandos patrolling along the Batticolao–Kalmunai road shot and killed four innocent Tamil youths at Koaddai Kallaru in the Eastern Province today. The dead have been identified as – K. Somasunderam (18 years), V. Vijayakumar (17 years), I. Ravindran (18 years), and K. Kirubarajah (18 years).

Troops demolish hospital: Sri Lanka armed forces dynamited and completely destroyed five buildings belonging to the Vallai Co-operative Hospital in the Jaffna district in the early hours of the morning. The reason for the dynamiting has not been announced. A few days back troops had entered the hospital and inspected the premises. Just before the buildings were dynamited the occupants of the buildings including patients were ordered out by the troops.

Vallai culverts dynamited by troops: Two culverts on either side (north and south) of the Vallai Bridge were dynamited and destroyed by the troops today causing hardships to commuters. They have now to take a route along the Thondamannar army camp, something which they dread. The demolition squad arrived in armoured cars. It is noteworthy that even recently one of these culverts was blasted by the army and was subsequently repaired by militant youth.

JANUARY 26, 1985

Hospital demolition completed: The demolition of the Vallai Co-operative Hospital was completed by the troops today when they dynamited the five buildings remaining after the blast of five buildings yesterday.

Corpses of Tamil youths in Kallar lagoon: It is believed that more than four innocent Tamil youths might have been massacred by the police commandos when they went on the rampage at Koaddai Kallaru a few days back. The bullet-ridden bodies of three more youth surfaced at the Kallar lagoon today. The bodies have been identified as those of Sellathamby Selvakumar, Puvanapillai Ramanathan and Arasaratnam Manoharan. Their corpses were recovered from the lagoon by the villagers and cremated. Soon after the rampage several parents reported their children missing and they are now searching the lagoon in the hope that the bodies of these children too would surface sooner or later.

200 youths captured at Thuraineelavanai: Police commandos raided the village of Thuraineelavanai in the Eastern Province and took into custody nearly 200 innocent Tamil youths between the ages of 18 and 35. They also shot and killed T. Thambipillai (60 years) and his son P. Dharmalingam (12 years) who were fishing in the lagoon.

3 murders at Trincomalee: Three innocent Tamil men who were chopping firewood for home use in the forest lands near Kumburupitiya in the Trincomalee District were shot dead by the armed forces. Those killed are: Thambirajah Ratnasingam (35 years), Krishnapillai Nallalingam (36 years) and Selvanayagam Sabapathipillai (38 years).

Mini-bus shot at from helicopter: Soldiers opened fire at a mini-bus plying with passengers at Irupalai in the Jaffna district today. The passengers escaped unhurt from this unprovoked act perhaps due to the poor marksmanship of the gunmen coupled with the dexterity of the bus driver who had raced for shelter under an umbrella of trees.

'Weerasooriya' terrorises Mathagal beach: The sea of Mathagal is terrorised every night by a naval patrol boat named 'Weerasooriya'. From dusk till dawn the canon on board 'Weerasooriya' is directed at the beach and there is intermittent shelling of the land.

JANUARY 28, 1985

Troops demolish more buildings: Troops continued their demolition of buildings in the Jaffna District when they dynamited two buildings belonging to the Achchuvely village development training centre and flattened them.

Cobalt Unit confiscated: The Cobalt Unit installed at the only cancer treatment centre for the North of Sri Lanka at Tellippalai in the Jaffna District was dismantled and removed to Colombo under very heavy armed guard. The unit had been donated by the Canadian government while the hospital itself was built on public donations by voluntary organisations as the government was not interested in putting up a cancer hospital for the North.

Though this hospital was completed nearly 1½ years ago, it remained nonfunctional due to the government not appointing a Specialist Doctor to run the hospital. Two engineers were flown down to Jaffna from the Canadian Embassy in Colombo to dismantle the Cobalt Unit which was then sent by ship to Colombo from Kankesanthurai.

Private plane service banned: The government has banned all private chartered flights into Jaffna. Since the state-owned AVRO flights to Jaffna were suspended in 1978, private chartered flights had remained the only safe way of reaching Jaffna. With this ban on private flights the isolation of Jaffna from the rest of the country has been completed.

JANUARY 30, 1985

War zone says Cabinet Minister: Mr Anandatissa de Alwis, Minister of State and spokesman for the Cabinet, said that the North of Sri Lanka was really a war zone today at a press briefing held soon after the weekly Cabinet meeting. As is the universal

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practice of enforcing censorship of news from war zones, a total press censorship would be enforced soon, he added. He also said that it was no longer possible for the government to send oil and food provisions to the North.

FEBRUARY 1, 1985

Press censorship again: Stringent press censorship regulations were re-introduced today to cover all aspects concerning the ethnic conflict and troops–militants activities. These extend even to editorials, cartoons, photographs and readers' letters.

7,447 Tamil refugees in Mullaitivu: In a memorandum forwarded to President Jayewardene today, it has been pointed out that a total of 7,447 Tamil refugees are languishing in sub-human conditions in the Mullaitivu District in the camps. The memorandum, signed by 25,000 people, points out that these are poor and innocent Tamil–Muslim farmers and fishermen, totally unconnected to the militants, who were uprooted from their villages and driven away by the armed forces in December 1984. The villages involved are Kokkilai, Karunaadukerny, Alambil, Kokkuthoduvai, Naayaru, Chemmalai, Kumilamunai, Aandankulam, Arumugathankulam, Murippu and Thennamavadi. They are now living as refugees in churches and schools at Mulliyavalai, Vattapallai, Thaneerootru, Dravipiddy, Mullaitivu, Vettuvaikal and Silavathurai, more than 40 miles away from their homes. The memorandum requests the President to take steps to return them to their homes.

Eviction without compensation: 63 poor Tamil families living for several decades in the vicinity of the Thachankulam Air Force base in the Vavuniya district have been issued with eviction orders by the government as the area has been declared a security zone. They have also been told that they were not entitled to any compensation.

FEBRUARY 2, 1985

Stop atrocities against Tamils – Minister Thondaman: The Minister of Rural Industrial Development in the Cabinet of President Jayewardene and the leader of the Tamils of the Plantation sector, Mr S. Thondaman, has appealed to President Jayewardene to cry a halt to the atrocities inflicted on the innocent Tamils of Sri Lanka. This appeal was made by the Minister at the end of an executive committee meeting of the Ceylon Workers Congress, of which he is the President, held in Colombo today. The statement also said that innocent Tamils living in the North and East of Sri Lanka are being butchered in their own soil. Their houses are being plundered and set on fire. Their property is being destroyed.

People there do not know what is happening around them. People live in panic and fear. The Ceylon Workers Congress is receiving letters daily from hapless Tamils asking for help. The government has jettisoned the All Party talks and has called off the dialogue with representatives of the Tamil people. The government has instilled the fear into the minds of the Tamil people that what it seeks is a military solution and not a political solution. The plan of the government to colonise the North with militarily trained Sinhalese people makes this point clear. The Minister also appealed for an immediate resumption of talks between the government and the Tamil leaders with the assistance of the government of India.

6 injured in gunfire: Sri Lankan troops opened fire on a minibus plying with passengers near the Kallady Bridge at Batticaloa in the Eastern Province injuring six civilians.

Another killing in Jaffna: An innocent civilian perished when an army patrol opened fire indiscriminately in front of the Jaffna Municipal council today.

Bonanza for prospective killer-colonisers: The Government has offered excellent incentives for Sinhalese people who are willing to colonise the Tamil areas after undergoing military training. In addition to being given arms and ammunition (and of course, the '007 licence to kill') they would be given a grant of Rupees 26,000 towards building a house and thereafter Rupees 500 every month to help them going until such time they settled down into some earning of their own.

FEBRUARY 3, 1985

Corpses of youth in cemetery: The bullet-ridden bodies of two unidentified Tamil youth were found lying at the Villaveli Hindu cemetery at Pandatherippu in the Jaffna District today. They are believed to have been killed by the armed forces.

5,000 students without schools: Out of 49 schools in the Mullaitivu District, 25 are not functioning because they are occupied by the Tamil refugees who have been driven out of their homes by the armed forces. As a result, nearly 5,000 Tamil students have been dep-

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MINISTER PROTESTS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

life of banditry in the South all their lives, these men have been rampaging the district lifting cattle, looting and on occasions indulging in arson. They had also been harassing the farmers by demanding Kappan (protection money). I believe there is evidence of this with Your Excellency from official sources. I also understand that militants had repeatedly warned these men to refrain from their nefarious activities.

'Several families of Tamil settlers in these areas, unable to bear the harassment any longer, have vacated their farms.

Kappalthurai – Trincomalee

The continued harassment of 57 families of Indian origin Tamil settlers at

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

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UNWITTING CONTRIBUTION BY CANADIANS TO PERSECUTION IN SRI LANKA

By Rev. R.G. MacNeil

The killing of a Sri Lankan Catholic priest, Father Mary Bastian, by government troops received a brief mention in 'The Citizen' of January 7, in comparison to the extensive coverage of the trial of the killers of Father Jerzy Popieluszko in Poland.

However, this murder of a priest and two teenage boys inside St Anne's church and the fatal shooting of six civilians outside the church in Mannar, a Tamil town in northern Sri Lankan has close links with Canada because that government is a beneficiary of Canadian aid.

Sri Lanka receives more aid on a per capita basis from CIDA than any other beneficiary – $100 million on the Mahaweli dam project alone. Still their civil rights record is atrocious. The Canadian Bulletin of Amnesty International of April, 1984, lists Father Aparaham Singarayar with the following notation: 'A Roman Catholic priest and a member of Sri Lanka's Tamil ethnic community, he is reported to have been tortured in an army camp in November, 1982, while in incomunicado detention. He is still in detention, awaiting trial.'

In an editorial, the 'Globe and Mail' of August 20, 1984, wrote: 'The Sri Lankan government has tolerated indiscriminate violence by the armed forces against innocent Tamil civilians . . . (it) did at least own up to last week's military rampage in Mannar. It promised to compensate the innocent victims and discipline the troops. But since Colombo (the capital) has yet to punish the Sinhalese mobs that ran amok last July, how credible are these promises?' The recent killings in the same town belie any move to stop these atrocities.

The same 'Globe and Mail' editorial makes an important demand on behalf of all Canadians in view of the record of the Sri Lankan government.

'There are occasions when the federal government should consider its bilateral aid to a particular country in order to make a point about human rights. When, for instance, a government orders or permits the repeated massacre of many of its own citizens, it clearly forfeits any moral claim to Canada's help.'

Historic roots

The historic roots to the present persecutions date back to 1833 when the British made Ceylon, later to be called Sri Lanka, a colony. For administrative convenience they united the Tamil and Sinhalese regions into one unit.

With the coming of independence, the Tamils, who make up 25 per cent of the population, found themselves excluded from the government and discriminated against in holding property and keeping their culture as well as in finding employment and education.

The Catholic church is one of the few organised groups in the Tamil community, although Catholics are only about seven per cent of the total. The Sri Lankan government, which is nominally secular, is substantially Buddhist with an historical antipathy toward Christians and Hindus.

They are presently stepping up their opposition to the Catholic church within the Tamil community. This is evidenced by the killing of Father Bastian and the detention without trial of Fathers Singarayar and Sinnarasa. The bishops of Sri Lanka fear for the safety of their priests and people. Unwilling, the Christian people of Canada, through foreign aid, are contributing to the persecution of other Christian people in Sri Lanka. There is a verified link between foreign aid and beefing up the Sri Lankan military who are the perpetrators of these atrocities. The 'Globe and Mail' reports that 'some development projects, particularly in the northern province (Tamil), would be postponed and the money voted for them diverted to defence'. They quote the Ministers for National Security and Finance as their sources for this information. On behalf of all Canadians, CIDA should take a critical look at the use of Canadian development fund in Sri Lanka.

By courtesy of 'The Citizen', Ottawa, January 19 1985

FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Kappalthurai in Trincomalee has already brought the government into disrepute and ridicule. The facts of this case, as far as I could ascertain, are given below.

'There were 47 families of Tamil refugees of the 1977 disturbances from the plantations settled at Kappathurai. Thirty-four of these families had either valid permits or their passes included in the 1976 encroachment survey and therefore entitled to crown land. In July 1983 their houses had been burnt and they were driven away. Thereafter with the assistance of a Norwegian relief organisation and with the approval of the GA, 34 houses were constructed. When these houses were ready for occupation, the forces moved in and destroyed them.

Complicate the negotiations

'I would like to ask Your Excellency whether the persistence with which provocative acts of this nature to alter the composition of the villages and rural settlements already existing in these areas, is not designed to provoke communal tensions on all sides and complicate the negotiations under way for a settlement?

'Your Excellency would appreciate the fact that these 'policies' pursued by the various Ministries without any reference to the Cabinet of Ministers are whittling away the influence and authority over the people of Indian origin which I have built up over the last 45 years and which Your Excellency and the United National Party relied upon to an appreciable extent. The educated unemployed in the plantation sector are being led astray and unless the present trend is checked the consequences in the plantation sector may well be disastrous.

'I now look to Your Excellency as a last resort to check the present trend by adopting a common yardstick in respect of settlements on state land so that those who have settled on and developed state land could have their settlements regularised without discrimination on the basis of race or community, by creating job opportunities for educate youth on the plantations by implementing Your Excellency', assurance that the Citizenship Act would be amended by the deletion of the appointed date and by withholding state aid and sponsorship for the encroachment of colonies of Sinhalese in the midst of predominantly Tamil areas.

State of racial amity

'Your Excellency would undoubtedly appreciate the fact that an implementation of my proposals would go a long way towards a decrease of racial tensions, a return to a state of racial amity, and above all, a recognition that the fundamental rights as well as the guarantee of equality enshrined in the Constitution of our country is in fact a reality.

'I shall be obliged for an early date on which I could personally discuss these matters with Your Excellency.'

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CRM PROTESTS AGAINST GROSS VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

'Mass arrests of Tamil youth are being carried out. Detainees in custody of the state have been killed. Some members of the security forces have carried out massive reprisals against the civilian population, and in the course of their operations, have killed many people, and have caused much damage to private property, burning and destroying homes and farms. Peasants in the language border areas have been pushed out of their villages. The killing of combatants and non-combatants on both sides has escalated; the civil administration of these areas and the normal economic and social life of the community have been disrupted,' states the Civil Rights Movement (CRM) of Sri Lanka in a comprehensive statement issued on January 25, 1985, under the hand of its Secretary, Mr Desmond Fernando.

Charging the Sri Lankan government with gross violations of fundamental human rights, the statement, inter alia, deals with such subjects as mass arrests, ill-treatment of persons taken into custody, excesses by the security forces, adverse consequences of the latest emergency regulations and arming of Sinhalese civilians. The impact of the draconian emergency regulations has been described by the CRM as 'the disruption of the entire civil life of the community.'

The following are excerpts from the CRM statement:

(i) Mass arrests

'State security forces are now adopting, in the Jaffna district, the method of cordoning off specific areas and then taking into custody all young Tamil males, falling usually between the ages of 15 and 30, caught within the cordoned areas. These persons are being taken into custody on the basis that they belong to a specific ethnic, age and sex group amongst whom there may be suspected offenders.

'While it is correct that a large number of those taken into custody are released after interrogation, this method is in violation of their fundamental rights and is contrary to human rights conventions adopted by Sri Lanka.

'The method has been explained by state authorities as an inevitable result of the lack of information. CRM cannot accept this as a justification for its general adoption; it is an extreme measure that should be kept to a minimum consistent with the exigencies of the situation. If this practice cannot be abandoned, the government should expedite the inquiries and release promptly those against whom there is no evidence.

(ii) Treatment of Persons taken into custody

'Persons taken into custody in the northern areas are being transferred to detention camps in the South. CRM is aware that the conditions under which detainees are being transported are generally bad; at times container ships with no basic facilities have been used. Some detainees are reported to have been kept in camps with no change of clothing for as long as 15 days. CRM urges that detainees be treated humanely and kept in conditions that accord with basic standards.

'Some detainees held in camps in the North have been killed under doubtful circumstances. One such instance is in the army camp at Vavuniya where it was alleged that about 22 detainees had been killed while attempting to escape. CRM cannot emphasise too strongly the responsibility of the state to ensure the security and safety of persons in its custody. It will be recalled that the killing of 53 prisoners at Welikade Jail in July 1983 was condemned by CRM which called for an impartial investigation into the incidents and the punishment of those who are found guilty. The government has taken no action in this regard. This inaction could encourage the repetition of similar incidents. CRM notes with concern that there has been no follow-up to another death in custody, that of K. Navaratnarajah, who died in the Gurunagar Army Camp on April 10, 1983, and who was found at a post mortem examination to have sustained 25 external and 10 internal injuries. CRM urges the government to hold a judicial inquiry into every death in custody and take effective deterrent action.

(iii) Excesses by the Security Forces

'(a) The security forces still retaliate against the civilian population after attacks by the militants. Several incidents have been brought to the attention of CRM. The instance of the incidents at Mannar on 4th December 1984 can be taken as one of the worst. An attack on a jeep which resulted in the death of one soldier and injury to several others, had been followed, according to reliable reports, by a mass attack on civilians living within three to four miles of the incident, on the passengers of buses plying this road and on the staff of the Murunkan Post Office. The final death toll has been estimated at about 107.

Numerous other cases of arbitrary killing of civilians by the security forces have been also reported from Jaffna, Vavuniya and Mullaitivu districts. There have been other alleged incidents in Mannar as well, in which civilians including two members of Christian clergy have been killed. CRM cannot accept the argument that the State is unable to find reliable evidence to prosecute such offenders. The state must ensure that its security forces do not turn on civilians in the pursuit of its military operations and must be quick to punish infractions. It is not possible to condone the killing of civilian non-combatants by the security forces.

(b) CRM is aware of increasing complaints that women have been sexually molested and raped by some members of the security forces in their search and arrest operations. CRM calls upon the government to devise measures which will prevent such incidents and, where they have occurred, to punish the offenders.

(c) CRM has referred, in earlier statements, to complaints of theft by some members of the security forces in the course of their operations. Such thefts continue and the government does not appear to have taken effective deterrent action.

(iv) Effects of Security Operations on Civilian Life

The government has declared the Jaffna and part of the Kilinochchi District as a security zone, and the littoral from Mannar to Mullaitivu (subsequently extended from Kokkilai to Kudremalai Point) to a distance of 100 metres inland from the beach (and five miles seaward) as a prohibited zone; it has enacted a series of regulations controlling various forms of activity within the zones.

'No person can be within the prohibited zone without a permit. This means in effect the forced evacuation of other persons living within this area. The magnitude of this operation, if it is to be carried out, is enormous, as a significant part of the population of the Jaffna district lives on the northern coastline from Ponnalai to Point Pedro. Reliable reports indicate that about 80,000 people have been already relocated, very often in refugee camps. The fishing industry in Jaffna district which accounts for almost 25

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per cent of the island's production of fish has virtually come to a standstill, throwing into enormous distress almost 22,000 families of fishermen and of others dependent on the fishing industry in the Jaffna district.

'Other forms of distress caused by the declaration of the prohibited zone become apparent if one examines its consequences on a single Urban Council area. Fifty per cent of the 14,000 inhabitants of Valvettiturai are estimated to live within the prohibited zone; five of the seven schools, the hospital, the post office, the Urban Council office, the burial ground and the crematorium all lie within the prohibited zone. What will result, if all the prohibited zone regulations are rigorously implemented, is the disruption of the entire civil life of the community.

'Regulations covering the security zone are also stringent. No person can move out of or into the security zone without due authorisation. No one can operate any means of transport, including pedal bicycles, without a permit. Travel, when authorised, is restricted to certain hours and to certain routes. Private buses are off the roads. State-run buses operate only within the terms of the regulations. Fuel is rationed. Curfews have extended to as long as 61 hours at a stretch.

'These regulations have had several drastic effects. The lack of fuel and of transport have affected agricultural and industrial operations within the area. Farms lie unirrigated; factories lie idle in the absence of raw materials, fuel and workers. People dependent on these forms of economic activity are unable to earn their living.

'As a result of the curbs on transport, food supplies have run short. People and doctors cannot get to hospitals; doctors were issued with permits to use their cars only eight days after the regulations were brought into force. All schooling has been affected.

'The net result of the regulations establishing the prohibited zone and the security zone has been the total disruption of economic and social life in the region. CRM maintains that the methods chosen should never exceed absolute necessity and must not cause unnecessary hardship to the civilian community. CRM therefore calls upon the government to review the regulations establishing and governing the prohibited and security zones and revoke them as soon as possible.

(v) Arming of Civilians

'CRM also wishes to draw attention to another unusual step. Civilians in the Trincomalee district have been given arms by police, ostensibly for their self-defence. Instances have been reported of such individuals and groups using their arms to terrorise persons of the Tamil community. CRM is also alarmed by reports that fishermen and other residents moving back to the Mullaitivu area are being armed. CRM urges the civil and security authorities in this region to review this procedure immediately and to take such action as is necessary to prevent abuses.

'Finally, as an organisation devoted to the maintenance and indeed expansion of civil rights within a democratic framework, CRM would like to stress the absolute necessity of resuming negotiations in a form that would ensure a just political solution; the absence of such a solution and the continuance of the present situation can only result in the further erosion of the civil and democratic rights of all the citizens of this country.'

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FROM PAGE 2

Judging by what is happening today, it is very doubtful whether Lord Buddha and his disciples would be given an entry visa if they wanted to come to Sri Lanka to preach the Dhamma. Many of those who talked loudly and glibly from platforms about Buddhist virtues like compassion, kindness, discipline, etc., were in the same breath justifying killing and terror when it came to the Tamils.

Professor Karunaratne criticised those who rejected further talks with the Tamil leaders. How can we understand the Tamils and their problems, if we reject even discussions with their representatives, he asked. Concluding, he said it was a sad commentary on the state of things that prevailed today that the only occasion on which a Sinhalese, Tamil or person of another race was expected to say that he is a Sri Lankan is when he fills up a form for a passport to leave the country.

FROM PAGE 4

distrust which prevails *within* both the Sinhalese and Tamil camps. The ruling UNP is wary of producing a package of proposals which would be acceptable to the Tamils, because of the opportunity it would offer Mrs Bandaranaike to mobilise electoral support for the SLFP. The moderate Tamil leadership of the TULF find themselves negotiating with a government, which will not recognise them in Parliament, but talk to them outside it, only because they can't find any other Tamils to talk to. The TULF realise that they have the Tamil militant groups on their backs, and cannot reach agreement with the government unless the terms of such an agreement were endorsed by these groups. The militant groups themselves cannot be seen negotiating with the government and have to rely on the TULF 'front men' to put their demands across. Even if these demands are met, and an agreement was reached, Tamil misgivings based on the experience of previous agreements will persist, unless a third party outside the main conflict underwrites it. All in all, unless these complicated currents of fear and distrust can be short-circuited, the prospects for a negotiated settlement of the problem are bleak.

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THE WANDERING BORDER

By K.R. MANIKKAN

The Sri Lankan government is at war with its own citizens. 'Tamils are held in thrall by the army', declared 'The Times' of London referring to the situation prevailing in northern Sri Lanka. In the name of combatting terrorism, Tamils are being harassed and killed in Lanka, observed many politicians both inside and outside Sri Lanka. The current situation in Jaffna peninsula was described as 'a penalty imposed on a subjugated territory' by the Co-ordinating Committee of the citizens' committees of Jaffna when they met the President of Sri Lanka. Said Mr Sivasithamparam, TULF President: 'Jaffna is a veritable jail. To enter or leave Jaffna or any part of the security zone, you need a permit. No private vehicle can be used by any citizen.'

To the Tamils in Sri Lanka, the Government promises more of the same for perpetuity. It has devised a plan to alter the ethnic composition of the predominantly Tamil areas in the north. According to the 'Deccan Herald': 'This harebrained scheme owes its inspirations to the Israeli policy of creating Jewish settlements on the West Bank. The plan will involve the resettlement of nearly three million Sinhalese in the North. Even if transmigration on such scale is feasible, it is bound to result in a massive exodus of Tamils and create a refugee problem for India.'

All the oppressive schemes are being hatched and executed under cover of distracting screams of impending invasion by India. The secretary of the ruling National Party went one step further. According to Nihal Fernando, de facto invasion by India has already begun, 'using separatist guerrillas as troops'. Continued Mr Fernando: 'Sri Lanka's battle is not primarily with the terrorists but with the secret Indian attempts to invade Sri Lanka'.

Desperate at the failure of the Sri Lankan armed forces to suppress the activities of the Tamil militants, Prime Minister Premadasa and National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali shouted in unusual unison, 'What would be the position if the Sikhs came to Sri Lanka to train in terrorism and fight for secession?' What indeed! However, an unidentified senior official in Colombo told William Claiborne of the 'Washington Post': 'We have underestimated the will of the Tamil people. Their determination for a state of Eelam is total.'

The pivotal role of India was explained by political analysts: 'If India dropped out of the equation, Sri Lanka could become a pawn in the superpower struggle because of Trincomalee harbour, the best placed in the strategic Indian Ocean. So long as both USA and the Soviets recognise India as the rightful mediator, there is no threat of this conflict becoming globalised. But if there is any attempt to by-pass India and if a superpower interferes, the situation would become explosive.' Western diplomatic sources in Colombo and New Delhi say that, given India's long-standing perception of itself as the pre-eminent power in the region, it is not likely that Rajiv Gandhi will end Indian involvement in the issue.

William Claiborne of 'Washington Post' was told by a senior government official in Colombo: 'The terrorists say they can rout the army out of Jaffna in three months. I believe that, but only if they can have an uninterrupted supply line.' Cutting that 'supply line' appears to be the main strategy at present. Some Sri Lankan officials note that 'even with only partial success in stemming the supplies from South India to the guerrillas in North Lanka, the army has forced the guerrillas into more hit-and-run tactics rather than sustained offensive'. Such statements should be assessed along with Athulathmudali's self-proclaimed independence for Eelam on January 14th and when nothing happened, his claim that the army had prevented whatever that only he himself proclaimed.

Additional strategy

The additional strategy is to arm the Sinhala population against the Tamils. 'The country's youths (Sinhala youths only?) will be given compulsory military training to fight the Tamil militants', the National Security Minister told a group of newly trained cadets. He added: 'For every man the militants train in any part of the world, we will train a hundred persons.' Cyril Mathew, till recently a Cabinet Minister, equated the Tamil militants to 'mad dogs' and declared that they should be destroyed.

In all this hysterical rhetoric, what is glaringly missing is any attempt to understand the causes behind the rise of Tamil militancy in Sri Lanka. The now defunct 'all party conference' painfully prolonged its life during its miserable existence, to study the problem in depth, we were told. The belief in Sinhala ruling circles now would appear to be that the Tamil militancy arose just for the fun of it. In spite of declarations at various times to various people at various places that the government is actually looking for a political solution, the actions of the Sri Lankan state indicate an attempt to bring about a military solution.

So as not to be hampered in its attempt to achieve the military solution, the Sri Lankan government keeps on harping about Indian intervention and 'invasion'. G.K. Reddy of 'The Hindu', points out: 'It is time Mr Jayewardene realised that Rajiv Gandhi has no intention of saddling himself with one more intractable problem while he remains fully preoccupied with more important domestic issues like Punjab and Assam.' 'The assurances that India is only interested in finding a reasonable solution to the Tamil issue within the framework of a united Sri Lankan state and that India has nothing to gain by dividing the island, have not convinced the Sinhala chauvinists.'

Minor and intermediate minions in the Sri Lankan hierachy have for a long time been making wild accusations about India's actions and inactions. Recently, the Sri Lankan President himself joined the chorus. Addressing the Parliament, Mr J.R. Jayewardene accused India of 'arming and training Tamil terrorists who are being encouraged to intensify their violent campaign'.

Observes G.K. Reddy: 'President Jayewardene and his advisers have become almost paranoid in imagining that they would be able to establish a better rapport with Mr Rajiv Gandhi, if only he could be persuaded to entrust the task of talking to them to a non-Tamilian who had no emotional involvement in this ethnic problem. Another big fallacy in the Sri Lankan thinking has been the irrational presumption that the north Indians at the Centre are less concerned about the fate of the Tamils and therefore more amenable to the argument that any talk of regional autonomy for the Tamils in the present context would amount to paving the way for the emergence of an independent Eelam state. A sly attempt has been made by the Sri Lankan Government to by-pass Mr Parthasarathi and talk to somebody else in Delhi, little realising that Rajiv Gandhi is unlikely to countenance such a suggestion.

'The Sri Lankan Government has been making some grievous mistakes in assessing the Indian mood,' warns Mr Reddy. He continues: 'It is not beyond the genius of Indian and Sri

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22

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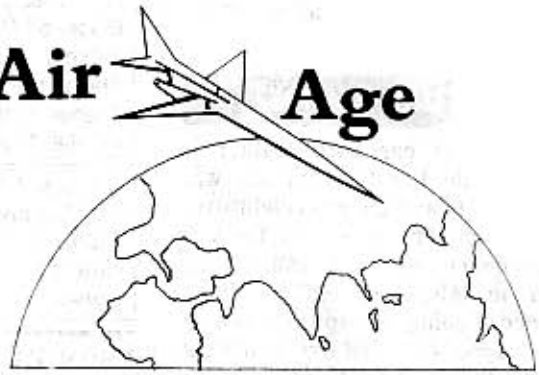

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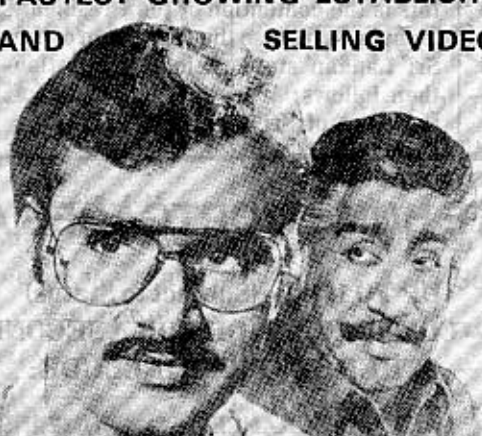

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TAMIL TRAVAILS

FROM PAGE 16

rived of their basic education for the last two months.

FEBRUARY 4, 1985

Troops fire at car with mother in labour: While the Government was whipping up near frenzy in celebrating the 37th anniversary of Sri Lanka's 'Independence Day', in Jaffna a Tamil mother in labour denied the independence of going to hospital to deliver a baby! Troops opened fire at the car carrying the mother, Vijayalakshmy (21 years) to hospital and killed the driver of the vehicle, Narayanasamy Ramasamy (68 years) on the spot. Vijayalakshmy suffered gun-shot injuries along with her husband (Jegatheesan Maniam, 28 years) and brother-in-law (Suppiah Shanmugam, 34 years) who were also travelling in the car. As instructed by Brigadier Nalin Seneviratne controlling the troops in the North, the car carried a prominent white flag but the troops ignored it. The incident occurred barely 50 metres away from the Jaffna Hospital. Trolleys were rushed out from the hospital and the injured taken in. The injured mother gave birth to a baby boy, who no doubt will live with the trauma of being born on a day which gave Independence to some but denied him the right to be born.

Sentence of criminals commuted: To mark Independence Day the Government released 1,750 Sinhalese prisoners serving various terms for criminal offences, while 66 prisoners on death row had their sentences commuted to life terms. These were done by President Jayewardene exercising special powers enjoyed by him under the Constitution.

S.C.O.T. TAMIL NEW YEAR LUNCH will take place at 1pm on Sunday, 14th April 1985 at Lola Jones Hall, Greaves Place, off Garratt Lane, London SW17. Tickets are available from Mr M. Thiagarajan, Treasurer SCOT, 24 Brook Avenue, Edgware, Middx HA8 9XF. Tel: 01-958 2739.

We regret to announce the death of Mr C. Suntharalingam, former MP, Vavuniya on 11.2.85. An appreciation of this Veteran Tamil leader will appear in the next issue.

FROM PAGE 20

Lankan leadership to evolve a credible concept of autonomy that could meet at least the substance of the Tamil aspirations so that this three million-strong minority community, which has been discriminated against in the past, is not persecuted in the future.' He concludes: 'India has a vital interest in a peaceful settlement of this ethnic tangle. Any prolonged civil strife in this neighbouring country is detrimental to India's own interest. Sri Lanka has been ignoring the fact that there is a limit to India's tolerance.'

In his address to the Sri Lankan Parliament, Mr Jayewardene pronounced: 'If we do not occupy the border, the border will come to us.' The border in question is the coast around North Lanka. it is not unoccupied. Tamils inhabit that area; they have done so for centuries. So, who is the President referring to by the word 'we'? He appears to imply that the Tamils dwelling on that island at the southern tip of the Indian sub-continent, are not citizens of Sri Lanka. If this is the contention of the President, it obviously is also the contention of the Sri Lankan state. A logical question then follows: Where is the border of the state of Sri Lanka?

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MATRIMONIAL:

Jaffna Hindu parents now well settled in the United Kingdom seek partner with sober habits for daughter aged 25 with Mars in seventh position. Persons now studying or employed in UK or overseas preferred. Box M16, c/o Tamil Times.

Jaffna Tamil Christian parents, US citizens, seek doctor or qualifying doctor, under 27 for daughter, seventeen, brought up in US, furnished house in US, jewellery and new car, all worth $150,000. Box M21, c/o Tamil Times.

Mother seeks bride for mechanical engineer son, UK citizen, aged 36, Tamil outgoing, prefer bride UK educated. Box M22, c/o Tamil Times.

Brother-in-law seeks suitable bride, Jaffna Hindu, professionally qualified, under 26 years, for engineer (B.Sc.), 31 years, well settled in UK. Box M23, c/o Tamil Times.

Brothers (professionals), seek a professional or reasonably qualified student for their only sister, Jaffna Hindu Vellala family, 25 years, height 5′ 4½′, passed Advanced Level, home-loving, pleasant with medium complexion. Charts please. Box M24 c/o Tamil Times.

Brother seeks Tamil Hindu partner for accomplished working sister, aged 28 years, Mars affected horoscope. Box M25, c/o Tamil Times.

Death:

The death of Mr S.A. Kulasegarampillai, retired teacher, Union College, Tellipallai, Jaffna, father of Dr Ruthradevi Paramaguru, USA; Rajasegarampillai, Consultant Engineer, Canada; Arulanantham, Consultant Engineer, Nigeria; Mrs Rathivathani, wife of Dr Krishnarajah, surgeon, General Hospital Jaffna, took place on 20.3.85. Intimation by Nathan, Croydon, UK.

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LETTER SENT TO PRESIDENT JAYEWARDENE BY MOTHERS FRONT

Your Excellency,

We strongly protest to you regarding the raping of young girls and a pregnant woman by the Security Forces on 14th December 1984 at Thirunalvely while on a combing-out operation. This is a very grievous act of the Security Forces on the helpless women.

The armed might of the Security Forces had been used to rape, molest and humiliate the women in this area under the pretext of a search for the 'militant youths'.

We personally visited the affected parties who have confirmed to us the raping, molesting and humiliation perpetrated by the Security Forces. These affected women have been threatened with reprisals if they gave evidence against them to the authorities. The pregnant woman is in an advanced state of pregnancy and was admitted to the Jaffna Hospital.

We do not understand why women should be raped, molested and humiliated by the Security Forces to solve the national question. We, therefore, request you to stop these inhuman acts of the security forces on the helpless women.

Joint Secretaries
Mothers Front (Jaffna)

MEMORIAL SERVICE IN U.S. FOR SRI LANKAN PRIEST

A memorial service for the Tamil Catholic priest Rev. Mary Bastian, who was killed recently by Sri Lankan troops, was held recently at the Blessed Sacrament church at Walpole, close to Boston, Rev. Bastian was helping the Tamil refugees in Mannar with supplies provided by charitable institutions like Oxfam and the Catholic Relief Society. He was attached to St. Anne's church at Vankalai near Mannar. He was said to have taken no sides in the communal trouble and concentrated his efforts on providing succour to those rendered homeless in the riots.

Sympathisers

The memorial service was arranged by Rev. Bastian's brother, Mr Antony Manuel Pillai, who is an American citizen and resident of Walpole. A number of Sri Lankan Tamils in the US and some from Canada and American sympathisers were present.

According to Mr Pillai, at 1am on January 6 his brother with the rosary in hand, opened the door to violent knocks of the Sri Lankan troops. The soldiers shot him, ignoring his plea of innocence. Two young orphans, living with the priest, who witnessed the cold-blooded murder came out of their hiding after the miscreants left the scene and ran to Mannar to inform the church authorities. The armed men again returned to the scene and took away the body of the priest after cleaning the blood stains off the floor. The Sri Lankan authorities have denied that the priest was murdered by the troops.

There was a demonstration on the Harvard University Campus to protest against the killing of the Tamil priest and against an artificial food shortage created by the Sri Lankan authorities in Jaffna. About 100 people took part in the demonstration organised by the Eelam Tamil Association.

Memorial Service — Father Mary Bastian
A memorial service to mark the 10th Anniversary of the Ordination of Father Mary Bastian will be held on Saturday 20th April 1985 at 1pm at the Rosary Church 211 Old Marylebone Road, off Edgware Road, London NW1

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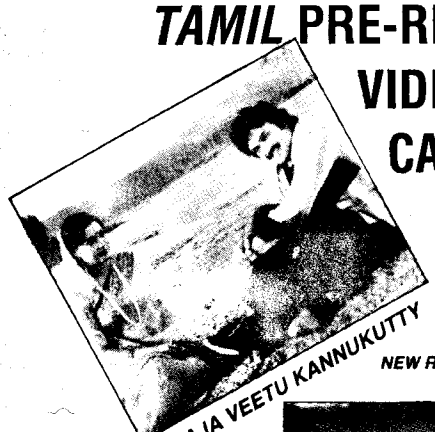

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